

840. L. 34.
6.

PROLOGUE

*Written for the Re-opening of the Theatre
at Brandenbourg House, after it was em-
bellished and enlarged in the Year 1795.*

London - III
K

*The Curtain rising, discovers a Temple, dedicated to
the God of Taste, full of Priests and Votaries;
an Altar in the Center.*

*A soft and solemn Music is heard, and the great
Priestess, attended by four young Women, two of
which are Vestals, approaches the Altar, and
bowing, speaks.*

YE sacred ministers of sense and truth,
And, ye fair votaries so chaste and pure,
That with unfullied graceful hands oft deck
With many a fragrant wreath this altar ;

45. 1. 16. A 586



To

To what I shall relate, attend with care,
 That with redoubled fire, our holy rites
 This night may be perform'd ; my aching heart
 Longs to behold, on Zephyr's perfum'd wings,
 Our just petition wafted through the clouds,
 That it may reach our God, the God of Taste;
 Who sits perchance beyond gross mortals reach
 And looks disdainfully on earth ;
 Whose sons, whose wayward sons,
 With noise and nonsense pleas'd, have driv'n
 The lovely God from all those haunts,
 Which, by his presence grac'd, were oft our own.
 But now, alas ! where are his footsteps seen ?
 Where are the traces of the God of Taste ?
 Dismay'd, from Gallia's bloody plains he fled,
 His rosy pinions drench'd in human gore :
 Plutus usurps his sway in this fair isle.
 In northern climes, 'tis icy Boreas reigns,
 And fiercely calls for grosser, ruder joys.
 In southern regions, careless Sloth prevails,
 And all the great, but mould'ring works of art
 Lie sadly scatter'd here and there, to prove

How

(3)

How much the God of Taste was once ador'd,
And now how little he is fought or known.

Kneels.

O lovely Deity, whose choicest gifts
Have been our constant aim, our daily care ;
Here, in thy consecrated temple ; here,
We hope to find thy long-lost loveliness :
Come with auspicious, with benignant smiles,
With love, with dimpled pleasures in thy train :
By thee deserted, wretched mortals must
Become a savage and unhappy race :
In pity to mankind, return once more,
Smile on thy votaries and grace this land.

Priests and Priestesses sing,

Hail, great Omnipotence,
So graceful, pure and chaste,
Whose rites are Truth and Sense,
Hail ! lovely God of Taste!

A 2

Rise,

Rise, perfum'd incense, rise,
To reach his native skies :
Hear, O hear, our pray'rs,
Soften all our cares.

Great Priestess sings alone.

O deity, we lowly bend ;
Thou, who art our only friend,
Give to our hopes, O give
Some token of thy grace :
Bid us once more live,
And sanctify this place.

Chorus as before.

Thunder and lightning.

JEALOUSY attended by the Furies, rises from the infernal regions, disturbs the rites, and finally puts to flight the Priestess and votaries; the Furies withhold the great Priest from defending the altar, which Jealousy destroys.

The curtain drops.

End of Part the first.

THE

THE SECOND PART.

*A gloomy wood, with a large decayed trunk
of an oak.*

*Great Priestess enters dishevelled, and in the greatest
despair, and faints in the arms of her attendants.*

*When she recovers, the youngest Vestal, kneeling,
takes her hand, and says,*

O THOU fair excellence, our sole support,
Ah let not grief, like a rude whirlwind, bear
Far from thy gentle mind our sole resource,
That wonted fortitude, which constitutes
Our last and only hope: O speak once more;
O speak, and tell us how our grateful care
May mitigate thy grief.

Second Vestal.

O heav'n, can we,
Can we behold thee from our altars fled,

An.

And all our graceful rites thus overthrown,
 And not attend thy trembling steps? O say,
 Why hast thou flown to gloomy shades like these,
 Where scarcely gleams Apollo's brilliant rays.
 Did solitude, and darkness e'er invite
 The lovely God to waste his sweetness here?

Great Priestess.

Here, in this deep recess, this hallow'd trunk,
 An oracle, a sacred oracle,
 Whose truth whole centuries have testified,
 Will let us know our fate, and tell us where
 The God of Taste is fled; and if we ever may
 Enjoy his presence, or restore his rites.

Great Priestess and attendants sing.

Tell, O tell us, sacred pow'r,
 Where our lovely God is flown;
 In this gloomy dismal hour,
 All our rites are overthrown.

The

The Oracle from the hollow trunk answers.

In Albion's isle, on th' ever verdant banks
Of old majestic Thames, exists a spot
Where playful fancy courts the Godhead's smile :
He's there, and there alone he can be found.

Great Priestess answers.

On Thames's verdant banks, O let us haste ;
And trace his footsteps on those happy shores,
Where lawful Liberty protects the God,
And saves his votaries from slavery,
From prejudice, from superstition's gloom ;
From all those checks, which, on all other shores,
Retard his footsteps, and impede his flight :
And, should we find him there, O let us court
The lovely deity with all the arts ;
But most with harmony, bedeck'd with smiles,
Such as adorn the British Virgin's cheek ;
Where mildness, love, and soften'd passions fit,

En-

Endimpled deeply in the blushing rose,
 The native English rose, which shall, I trust,
 Bewitch the God to fix his wand'ring steps,
 And on those banks remain; that there alone,
 Yes, only there, he ever may be found.

Exeunt omnes.

Scene changes to the banks of the THAMES.

Enter the Great Priests and all the attendants.

Here is the well-known spot, where many a bard
 Has oft, and sweetly sung in strains divine,
 Of arts, of science, and of purest love,
 Strains which, beyond our feeble measures call'd
 With irresistible pow'r, the lovely God,
 To grace and animate this scene: but hark,
 Melodious sounds bespeak the God's approach.

The

The God descends in a cloud.

Speaking to the Priestess.

Swift through the azure sky

Thy soft request

Has reach'd and mollified

My raging breast,

That heaves indignant at the vulgar throng

That oft debases thy harmonious song,

While from thy downcast eyes, the flowing tears

Fall, chrystal witnesses of graceful fears,

I swear by Love himself, that from this night,

These banks become my care, my chief delight:

Then, hail each rising sun with sports as new,

As fresh, as grateful as the morning dew,

Attune the lyre, invoke each darling art;

The Muses led by thee shall reach the heart,

The harden'd human heart, which gold or pride

To taste and science an access denied.

B

Priestess.

Priestess.

But if Ambition's monster wildly rears
His horrid form, array'd in blood and scars.

The God.

O chase the fiend from hence with dance and song;
Tell him to gloomy courts his deeds belong.

Priestess.

Should sorrowing injur'd beauty e'er this way
From perjur'd vows, and man perfidious, stray.

The God.

O take the drooping beauty to thy arms,
And with thy art divine restore her charms;
On tortur'd minds relief t' impart; O haste;
The God of Comfort is the God of Taste.
Here shall be only seen great Nature's hand,
That has unsparingly in this fair land,
Bestow'd on honest Britons for their toil,
The fairest beauties, natives of this isle;

Mean-

(II)

Meanwhile, a laurel wreath I will prepare,
To crown the choicest work of this night's care :
Begin the sacrifice, display our arts ;
Let Taste remain enthron'd in British hearts.

Chorus of Priests and Votaries.

While yet stern Winter's frigid hand,
Retards sweet Spring with chilling rain,
Apollo smiling o'er the land,
Bids varied blossoms deck the plain.

Great Priestess to the God.

So grateful accents hail this day,
When Taste, all graceful, chas'd away
That gloom which stop'd fair Fancy's play.

CHORUS, *great Priestess.*

Thy votive train may now increase,
While fresher wreaths thy altars grace,
And all our notes are Love and Peace.

The curtain drops.

Mr.

Mr. JERNINGHAM'S *interlude of* MARGARET of AN-
 JOU, *a* FRENCH COMEDY *and an* ITALIAN PAS-
 TORAL *followed, when the God of Taste descending*
from the clouds a second time, disposes of three
wreaths of laurel, saying,

From me is due the promis'd laurel crown,
 To three great nations, not to one alone :
 As here fair Science offers Taste a home,
 Let Britons ne'er for Taste from England roam.
 For this lov'd isle I quit my native sky,
 And catch new fire, from British beauties eye.

F I N I S.

(13)

Now thy graceful sports reviving
With each bright revolving fun,
Ev'ry human heart delighting,
Pleasure has thy reign begun.

Bring us roses, wake the lyre ;
Of love, of sports, O let it breathe !
May Apollo's sacred fire
Flow in ev'ry myrtle wreath.

Now, &c.





